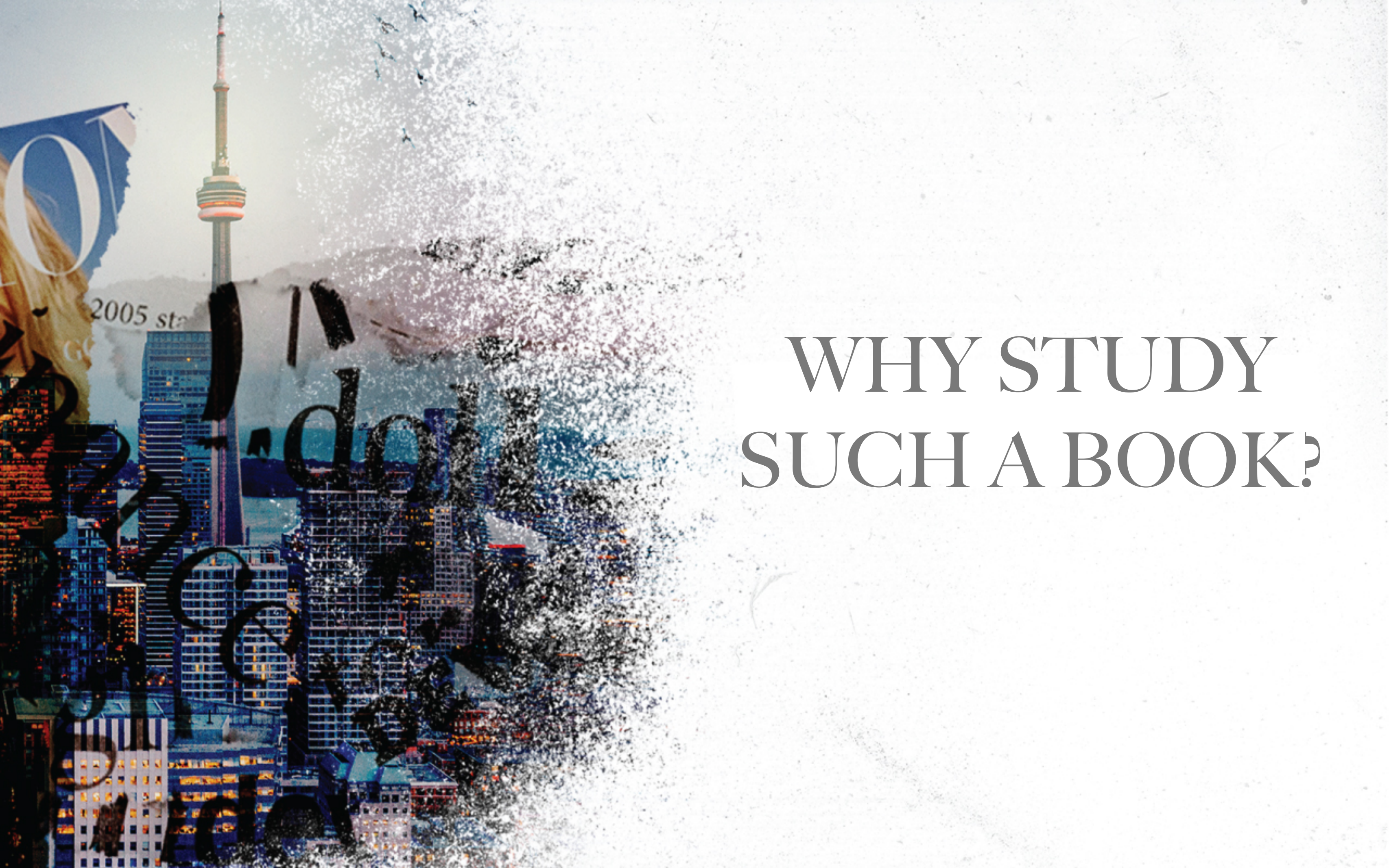




ECCLESIASTES

MAKING SENSE OF A COMPLEX WORLD



WHY STUDY
SUCH A BOOK?



It's honest.



It's honest.

It's course-shaping.



It's honest.

It's course-shaping.

It's apologetic.



It's honest.

It's course-shaping.

It's apologetic.

It's doxological.



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It's apologetic.

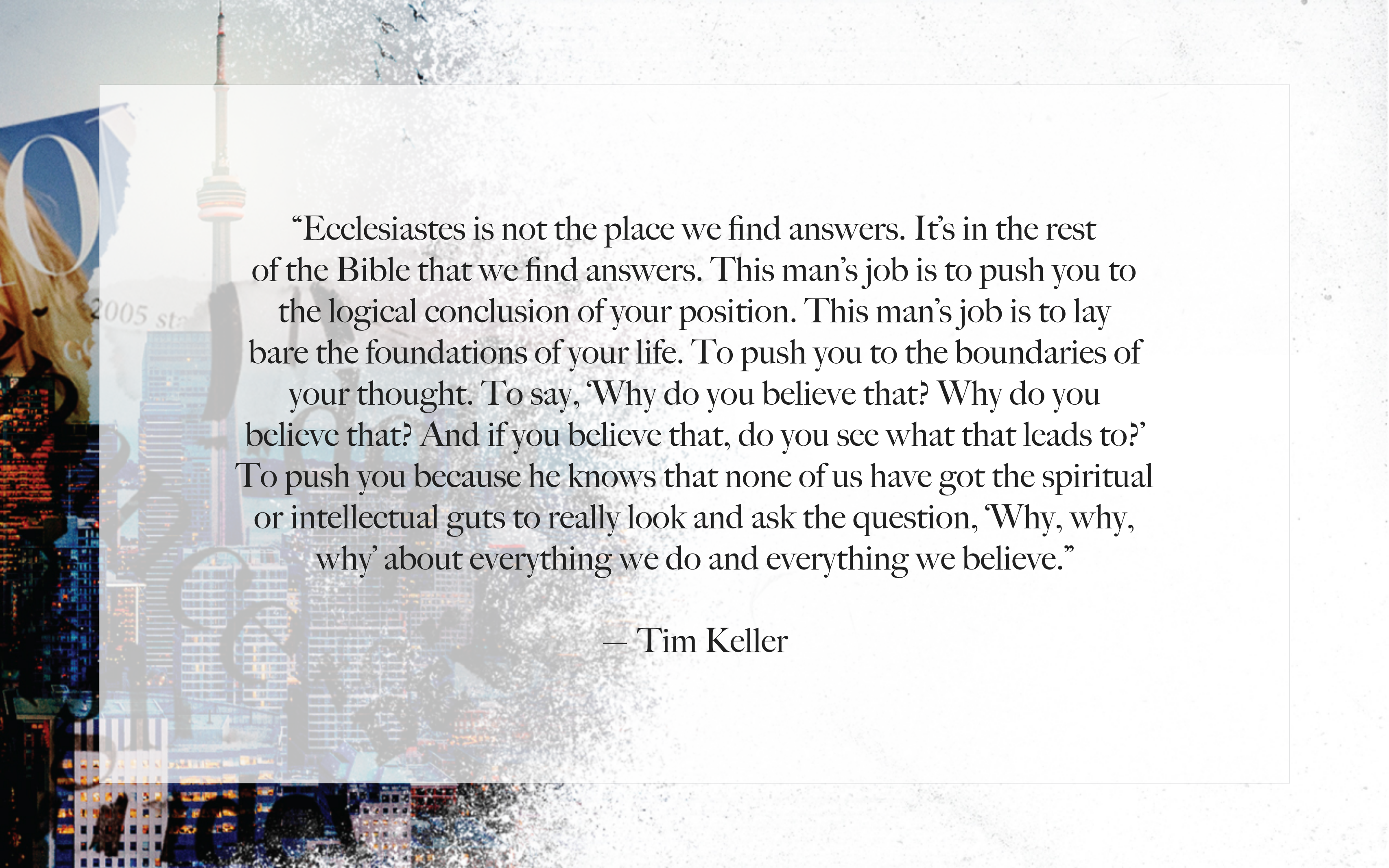
It's doxological.

It's practical.



A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15



“Ecclesiastes is not the place we find answers. It’s in the rest of the Bible that we find answers. This man’s job is to push you to the logical conclusion of your position. This man’s job is to lay bare the foundations of your life. To push you to the boundaries of your thought. To say, ‘Why do you believe that? Why do you believe that? And if you believe that, do you see what that leads to?’ To push you because he knows that none of us have got the spiritual or intellectual guts to really look and ask the question, ‘Why, why, why’ about everything we do and everything we believe.”

— Tim Keller



Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

— Ecclesiastes 1:2



What does man gain by all the toil
at which he toils under the sun?

— Ecclesiastes 1:3



UNDER THE SUN

life as we know it in a fallen world

a view of the world absent of God

a belief in God but one that falls short
of the triune covenant LORD of Scripture

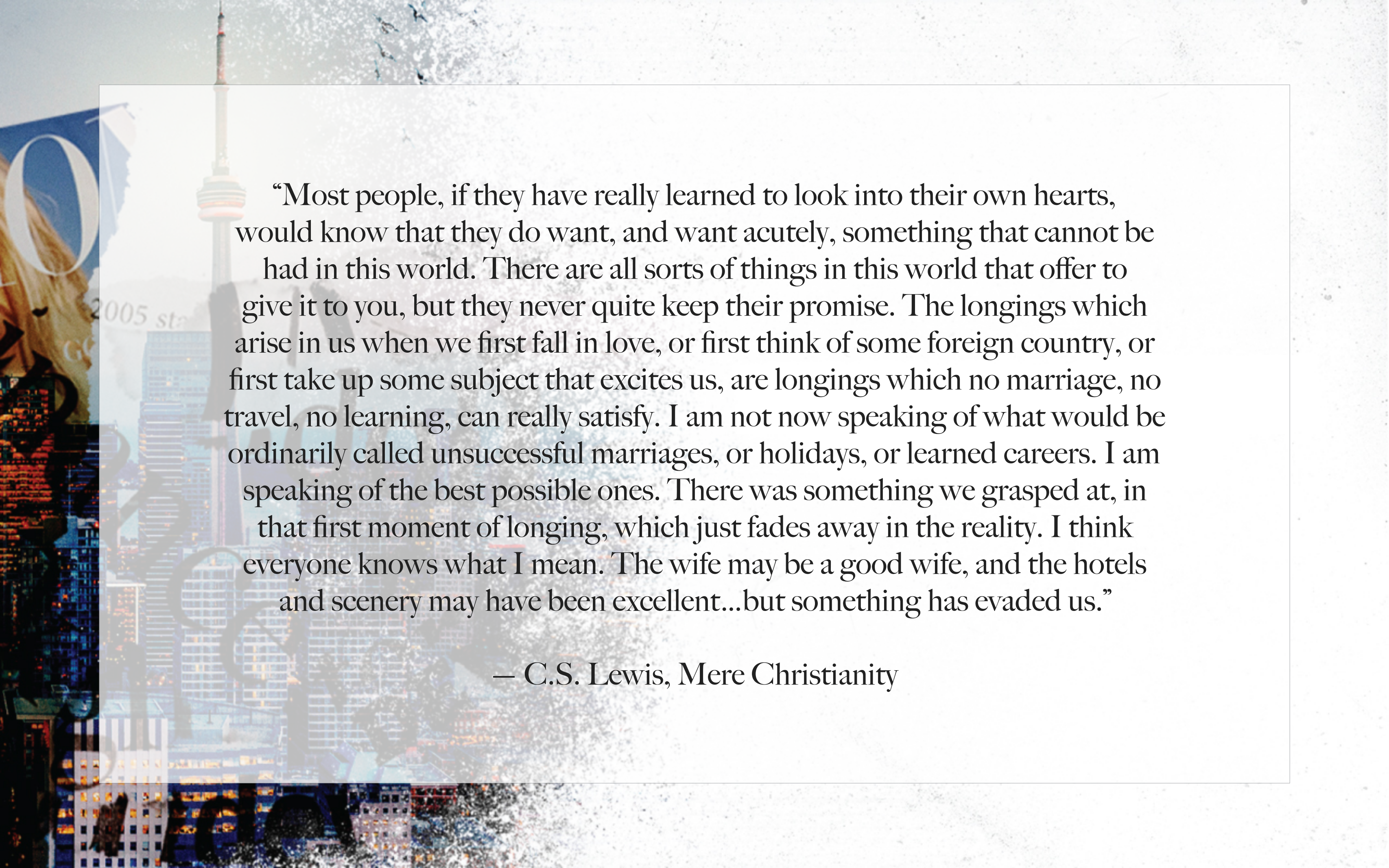
a right confessional belief in God
and yet a functional living for self and now

a limited perspective on life compared to
God's comprehensive, all-knowing view of the world



What does man gain by all the toil
at which he toils under the sun?

— Ecclesiastes 1:3

The background of the slide features a composite image. On the left, there is a large, stylized letter 'Q' in blue and white. Behind it, a city skyline at night is visible, with the CN Tower prominently on the left. The city lights are reflected in water at the bottom. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangular box.

“Most people, if they have really learned to look into their own hearts, would know that they do want, and want acutely, something that cannot be had in this world. There are all sorts of things in this world that offer to give it to you, but they never quite keep their promise. The longings which arise in us when we first fall in love, or first think of some foreign country, or first take up some subject that excites us, are longings which no marriage, no travel, no learning, can really satisfy. I am not now speaking of what would be ordinarily called unsuccessful marriages, or holidays, or learned careers. I am speaking of the best possible ones. There was something we grasped at, in that first moment of longing, which just fades away in the reality. I think everyone knows what I mean. The wife may be a good wife, and the hotels and scenery may have been excellent...but something has evaded us.”

— C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity



For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

— W I-8



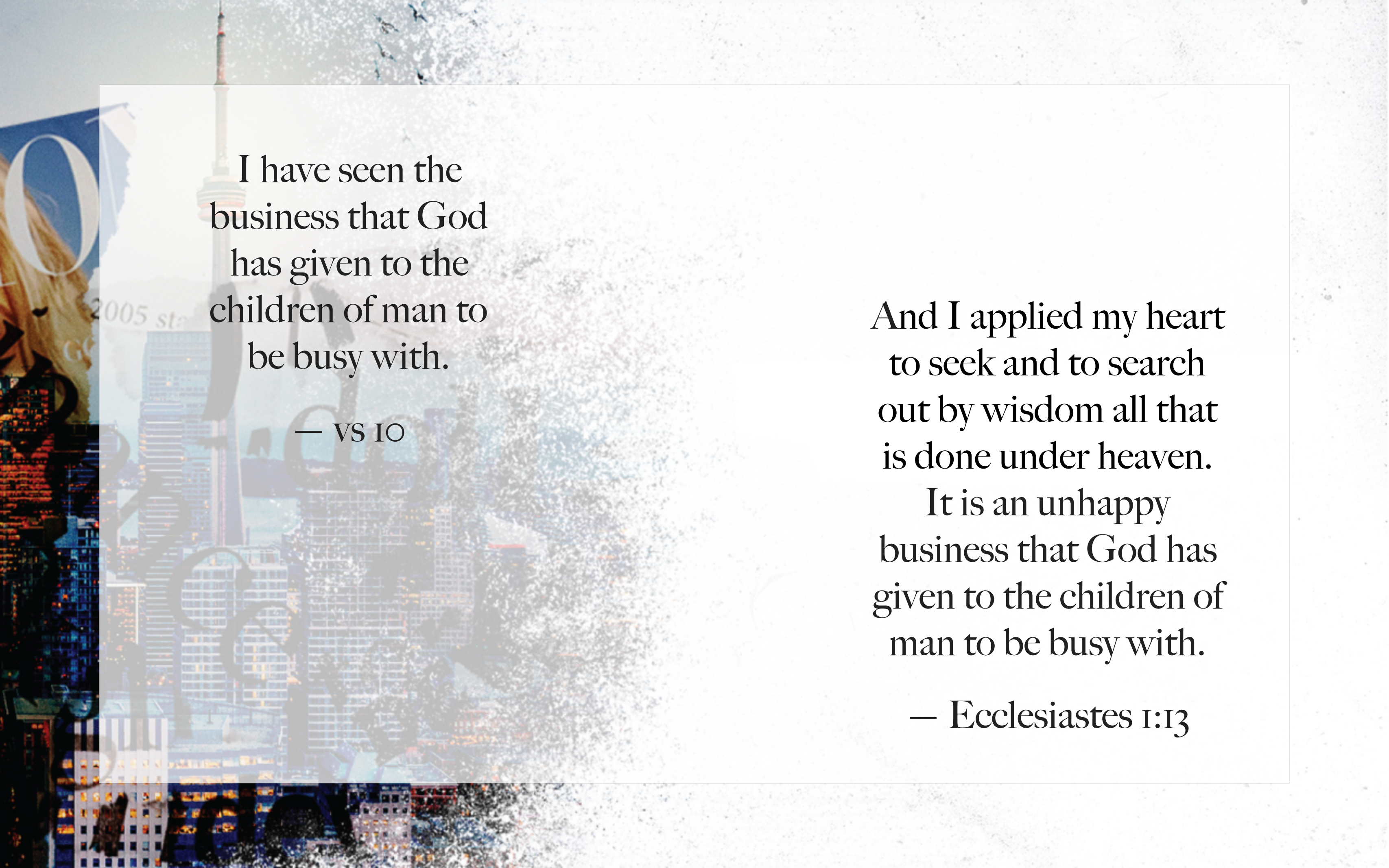
What gain has the worker from his toil?

— vs 9



I have seen the business that God has given
to the children of man to be busy with.

— VS IO



I have seen the
business that God
has given to the
children of man to
be busy with.

— VS IO

And I applied my heart
to seek and to search
out by wisdom all that
is done under heaven.

It is an unhappy
business that God has
given to the children of
man to be busy with.

— Ecclesiastes 1:13



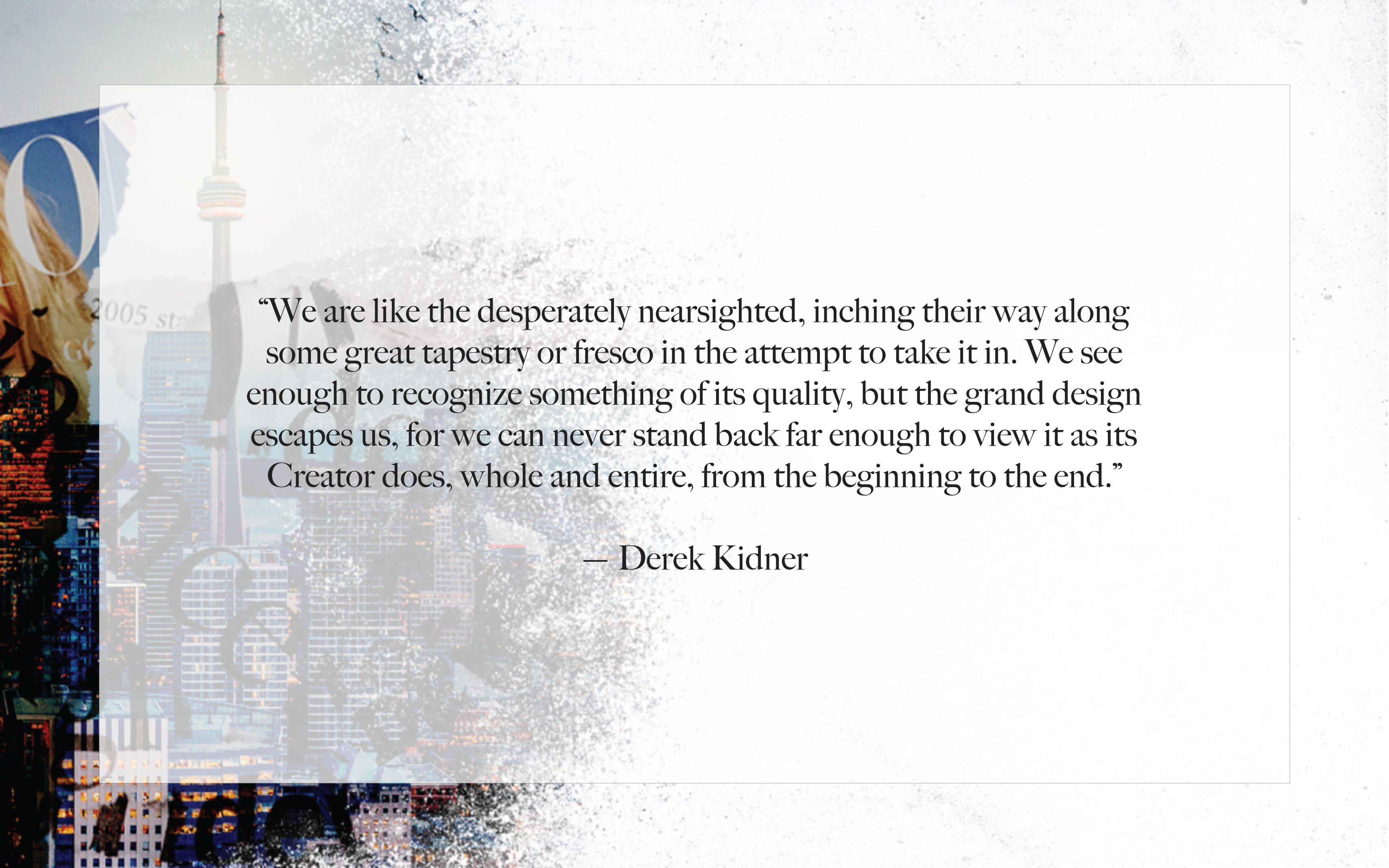
He has made everything beautiful in its time.

— VS II



Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot
find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

— VS II



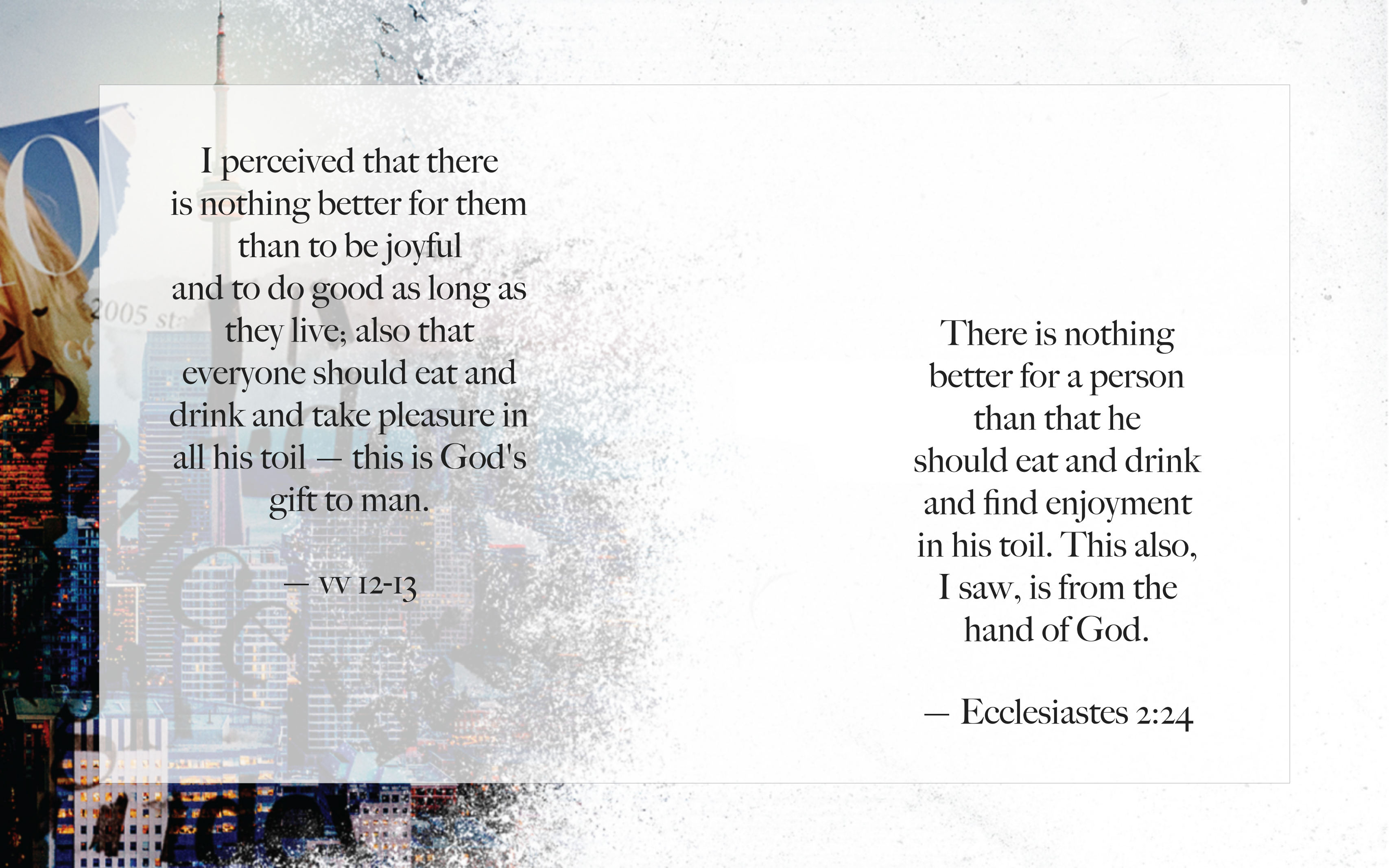
“We are like the desperately nearsighted, inching their way along some great tapestry or fresco in the attempt to take it in. We see enough to recognize something of its quality, but the grand design escapes us, for we can never stand back far enough to view it as its Creator does, whole and entire, from the beginning to the end.”

— Derek Kidner



I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful
and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and
drink and take pleasure in all his toil — this is God's gift to man.

— VV I2-I3

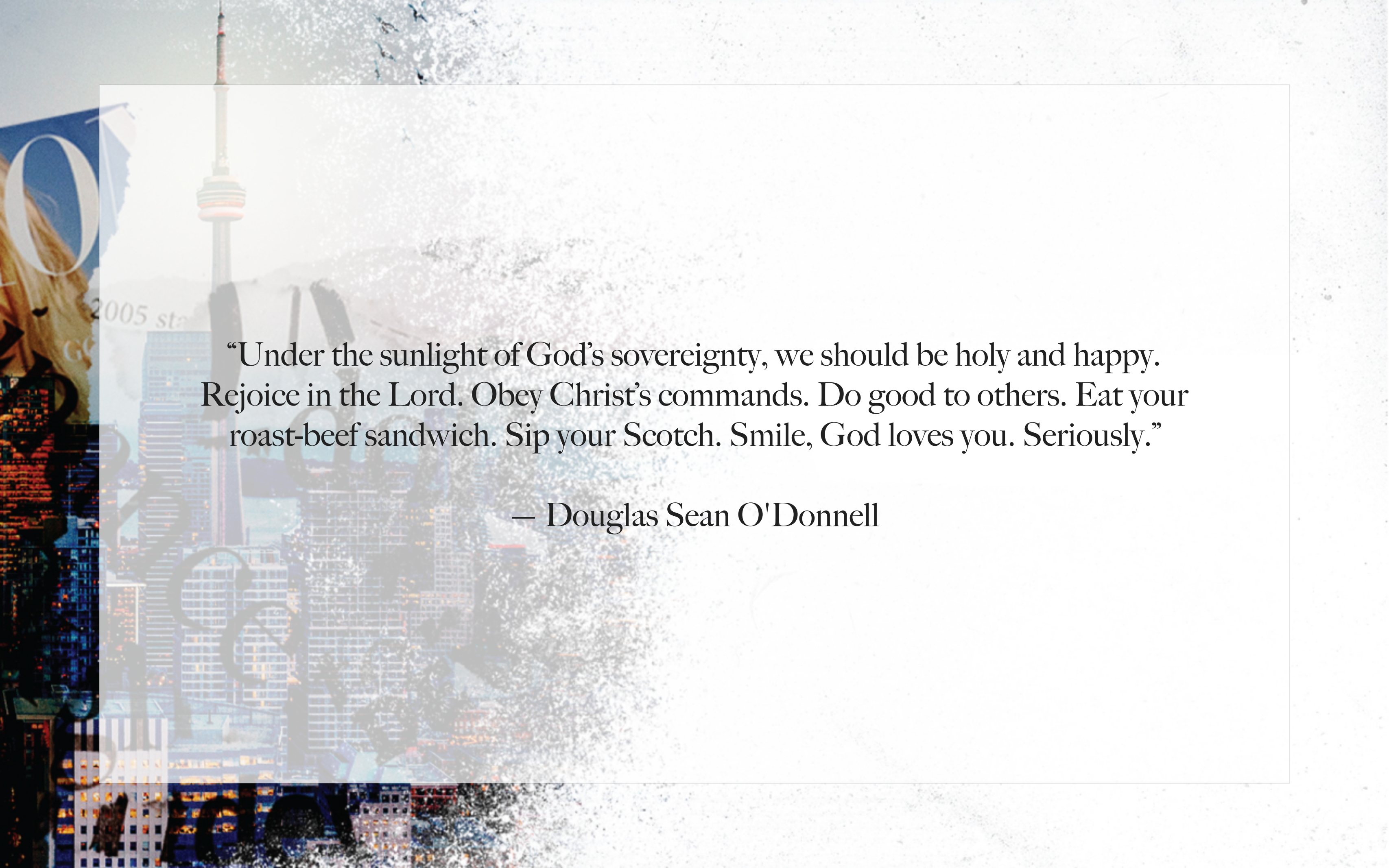


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— VV 12-13

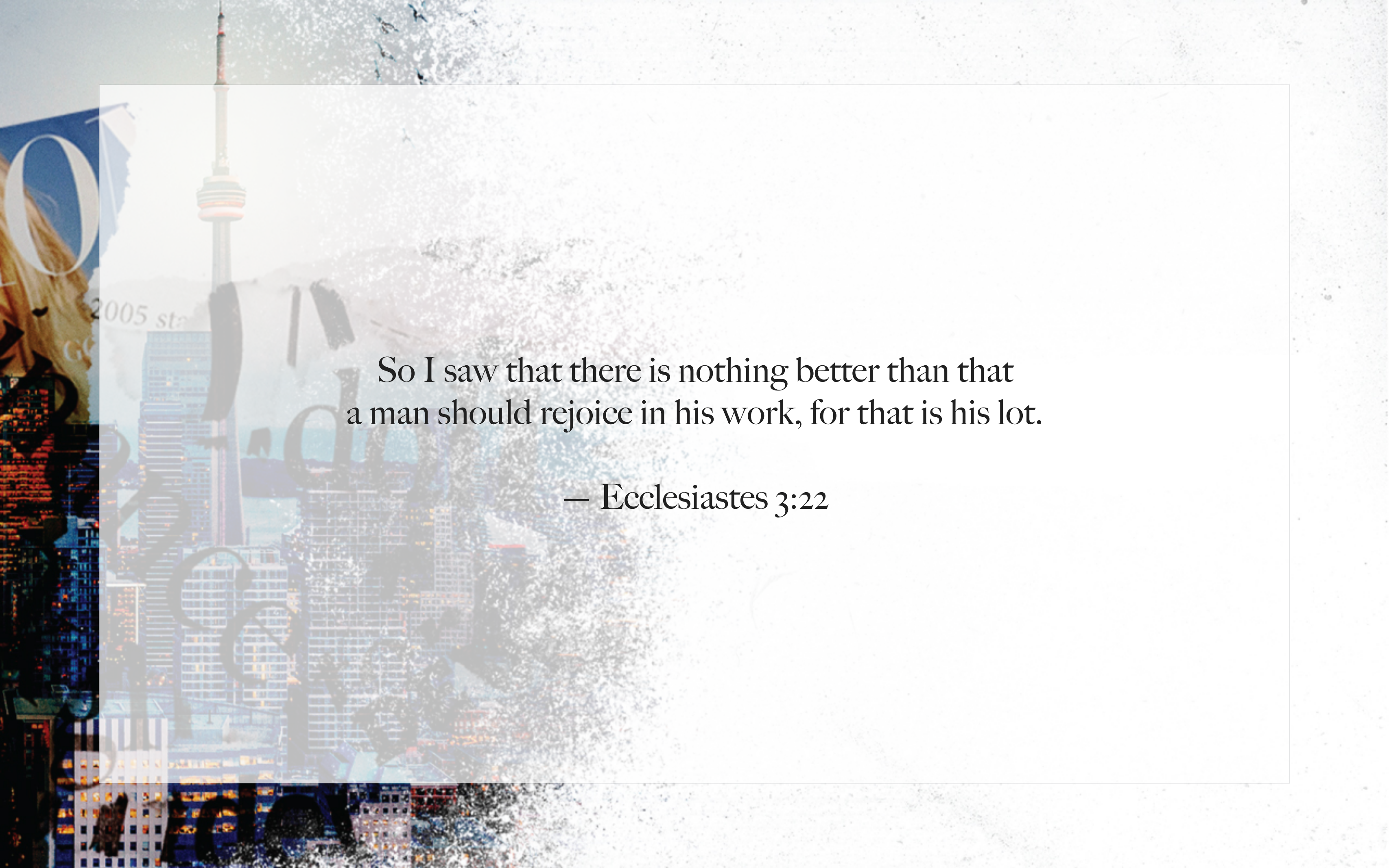
There is nothing
better for a person
than that he
should eat and drink
and find enjoyment
in his toil. This also,
I saw, is from the
hand of God.

— Ecclesiastes 2:24



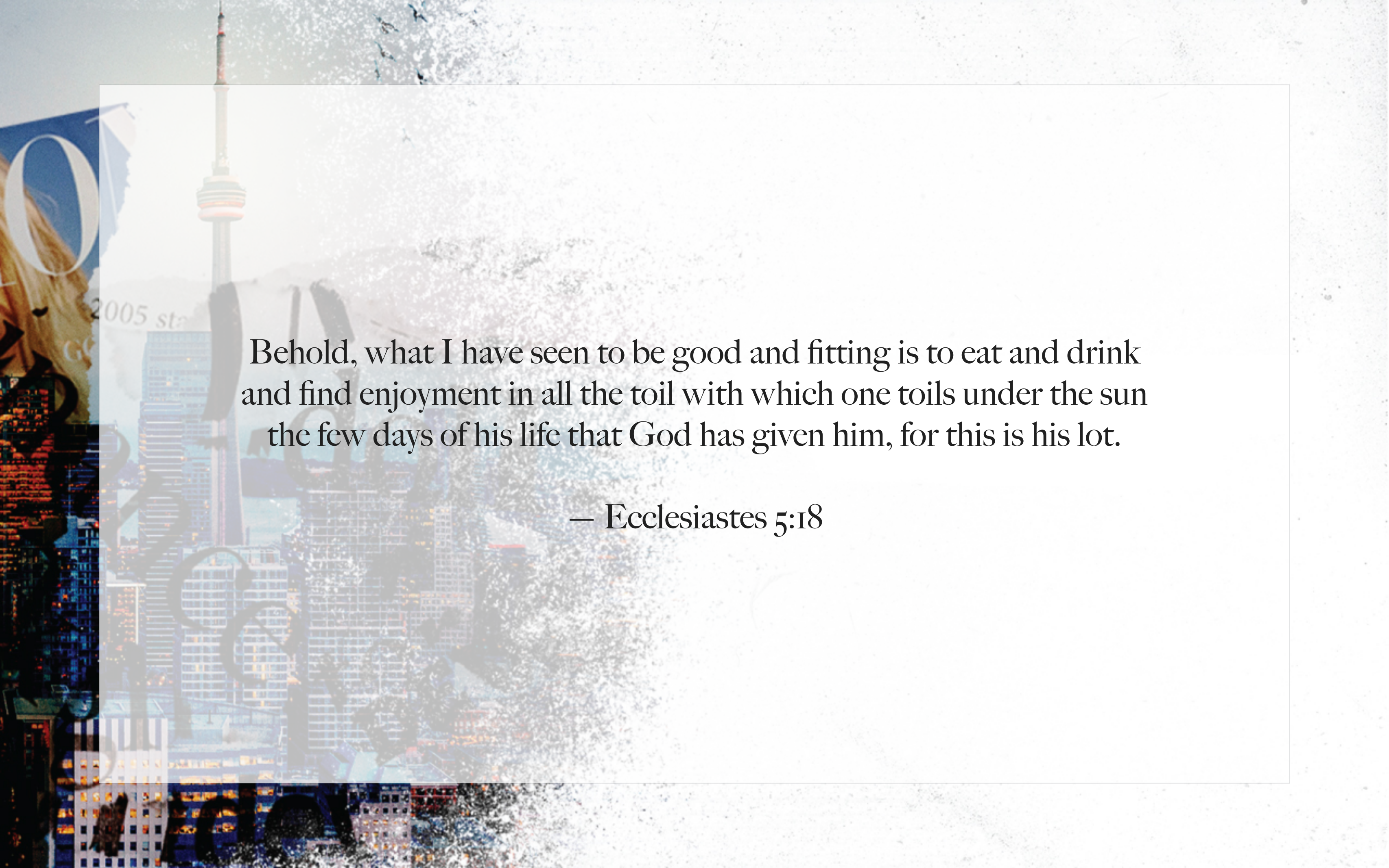
“Under the sunlight of God’s sovereignty, we should be holy and happy. Rejoice in the Lord. Obey Christ’s commands. Do good to others. Eat your roast-beef sandwich. Sip your Scotch. Smile, God loves you. Seriously.”

— Douglas Sean O'Donnell



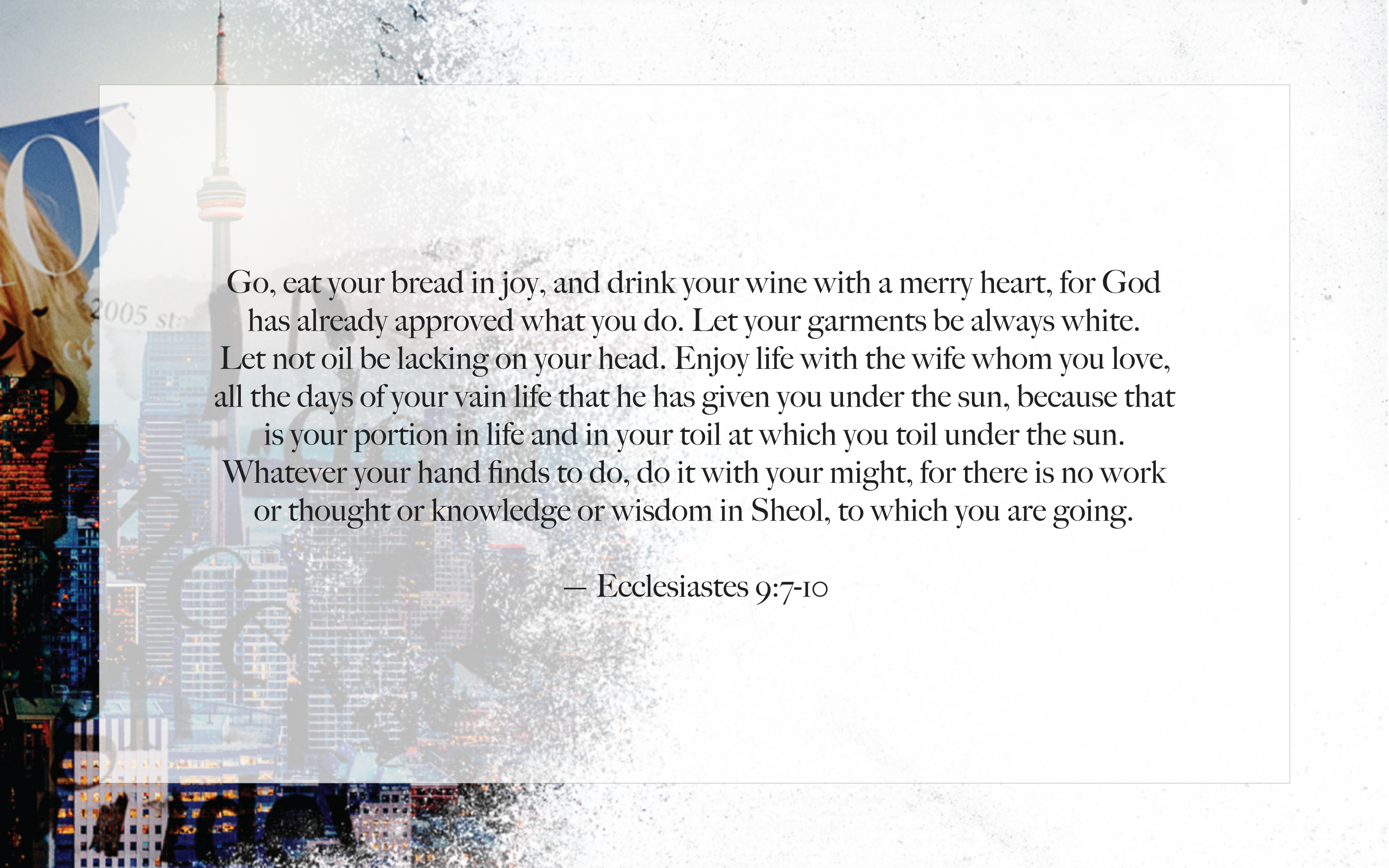
So I saw that there is nothing better than that
a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot.

— Ecclesiastes 3:22



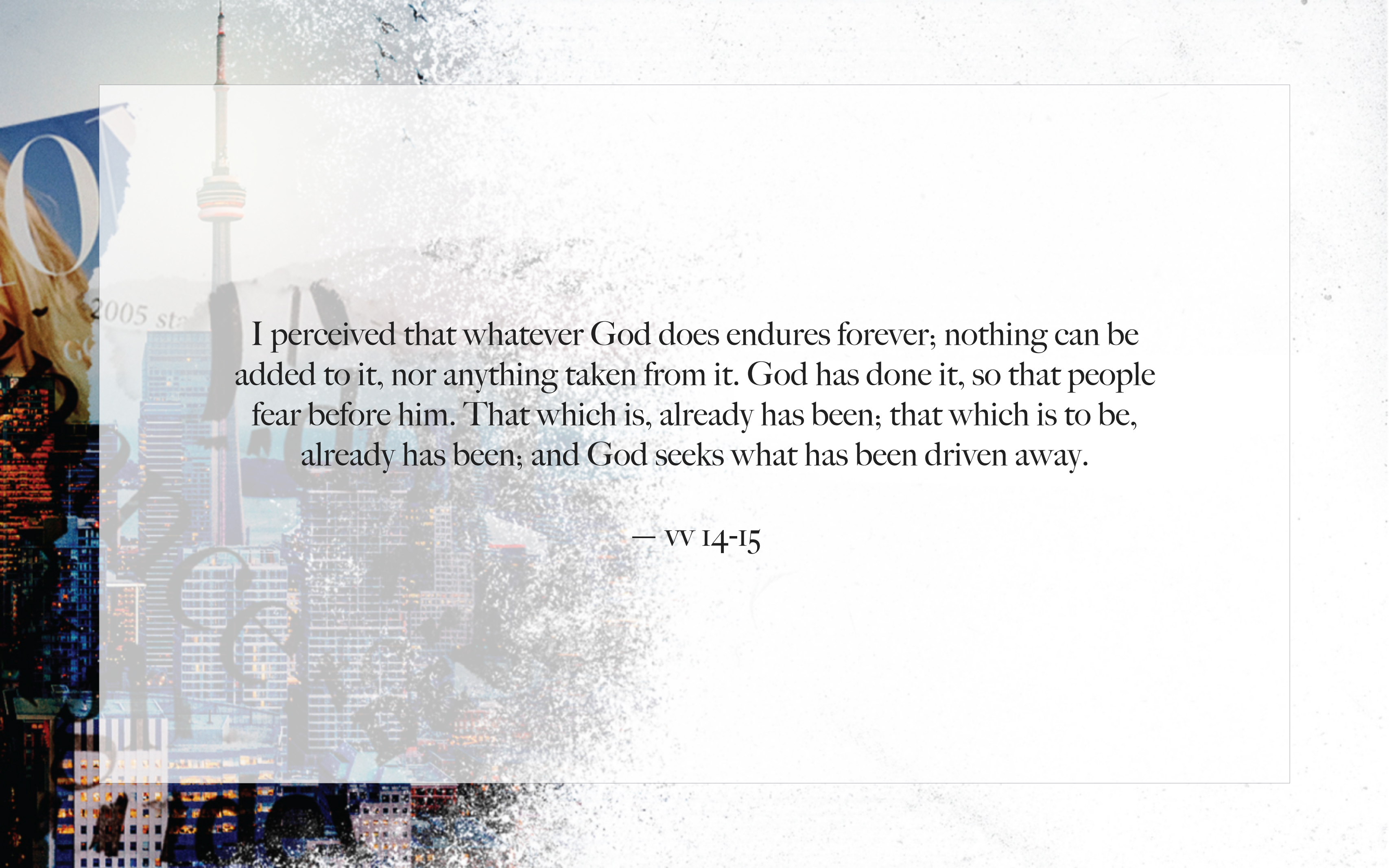
Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink
and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun
the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot.

— Ecclesiastes 5:18



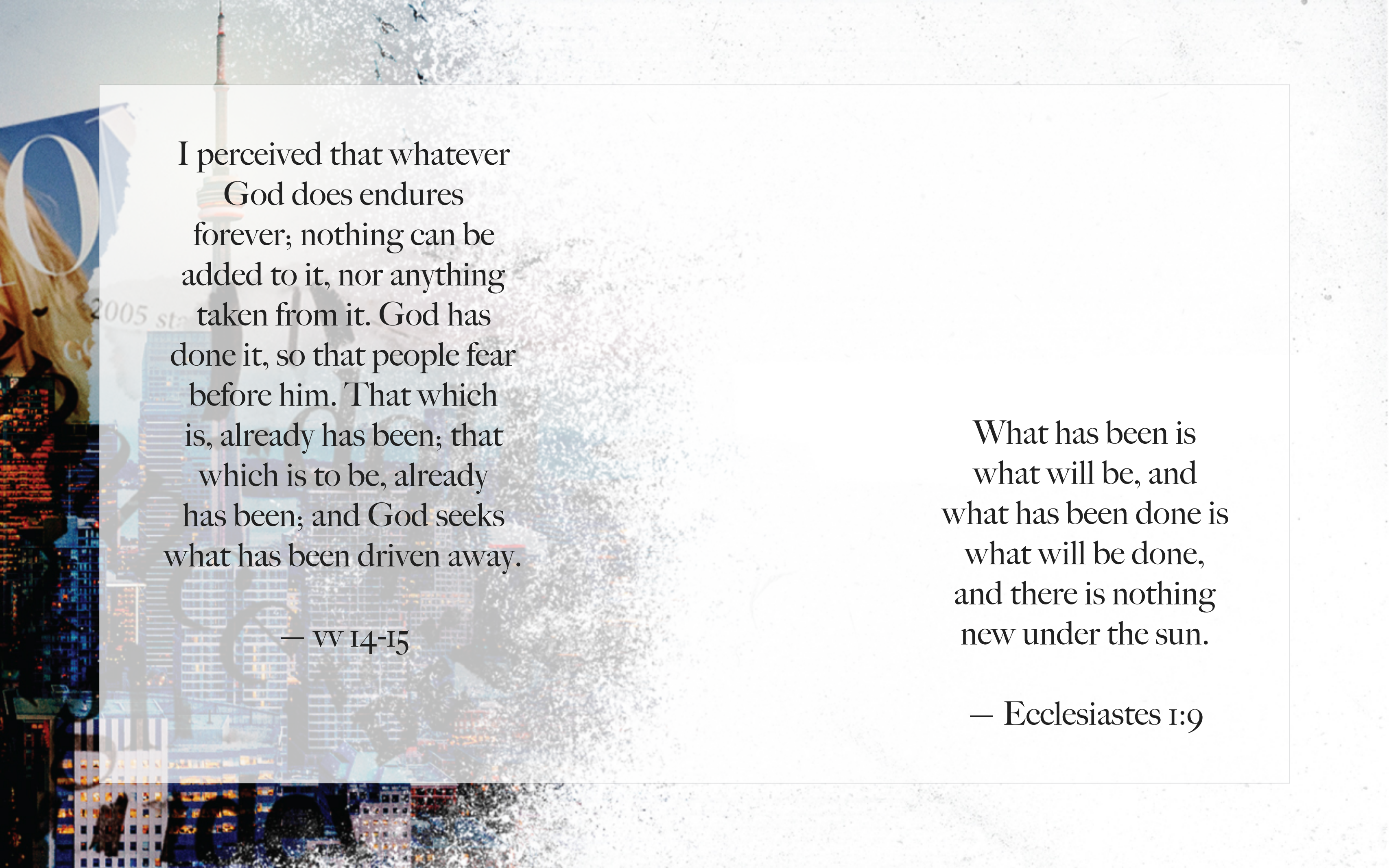
Go, eat your bread in joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do. Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your head. Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

— Ecclesiastes 9:7-10



I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear before him. That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.

— VV 14-15

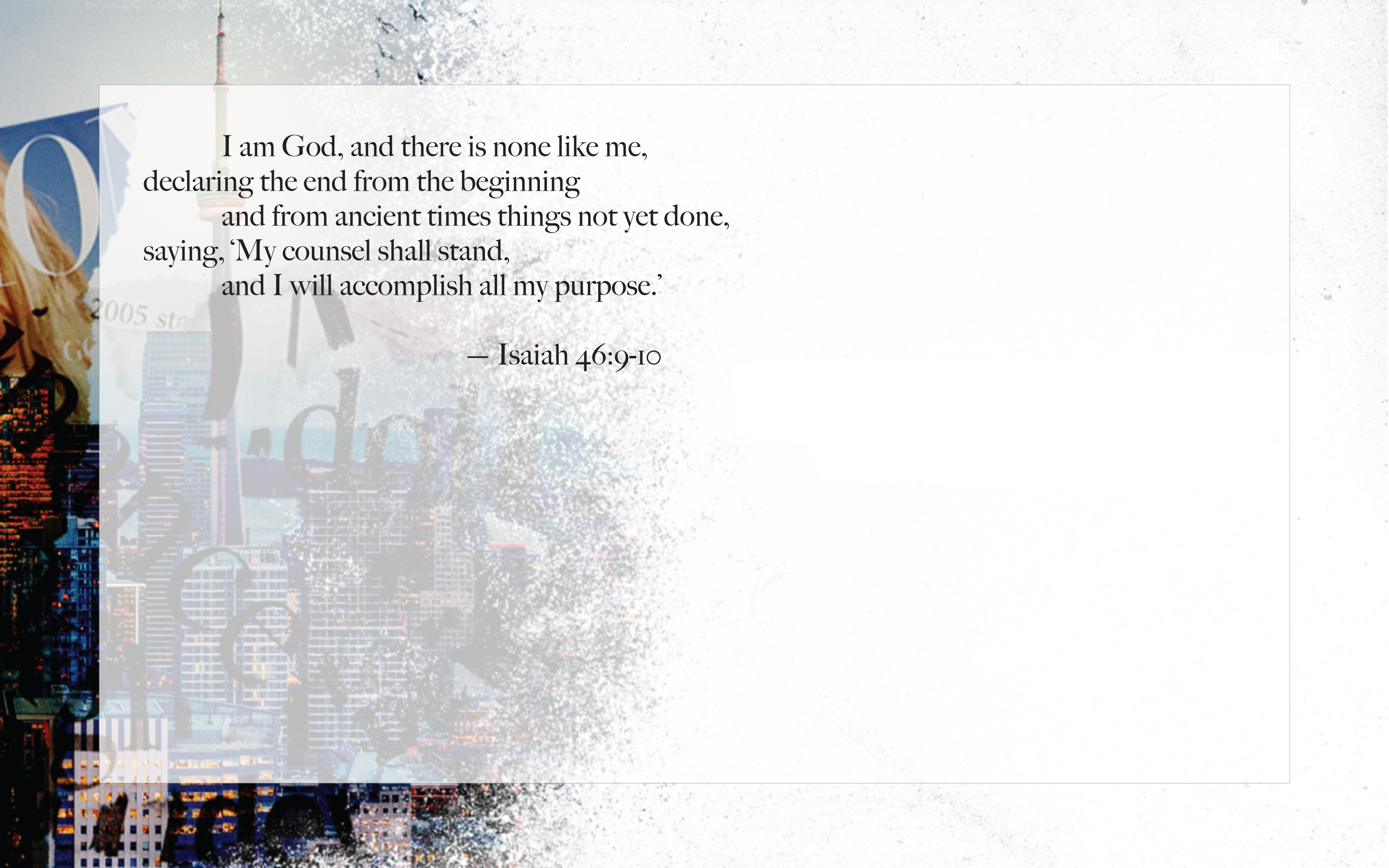


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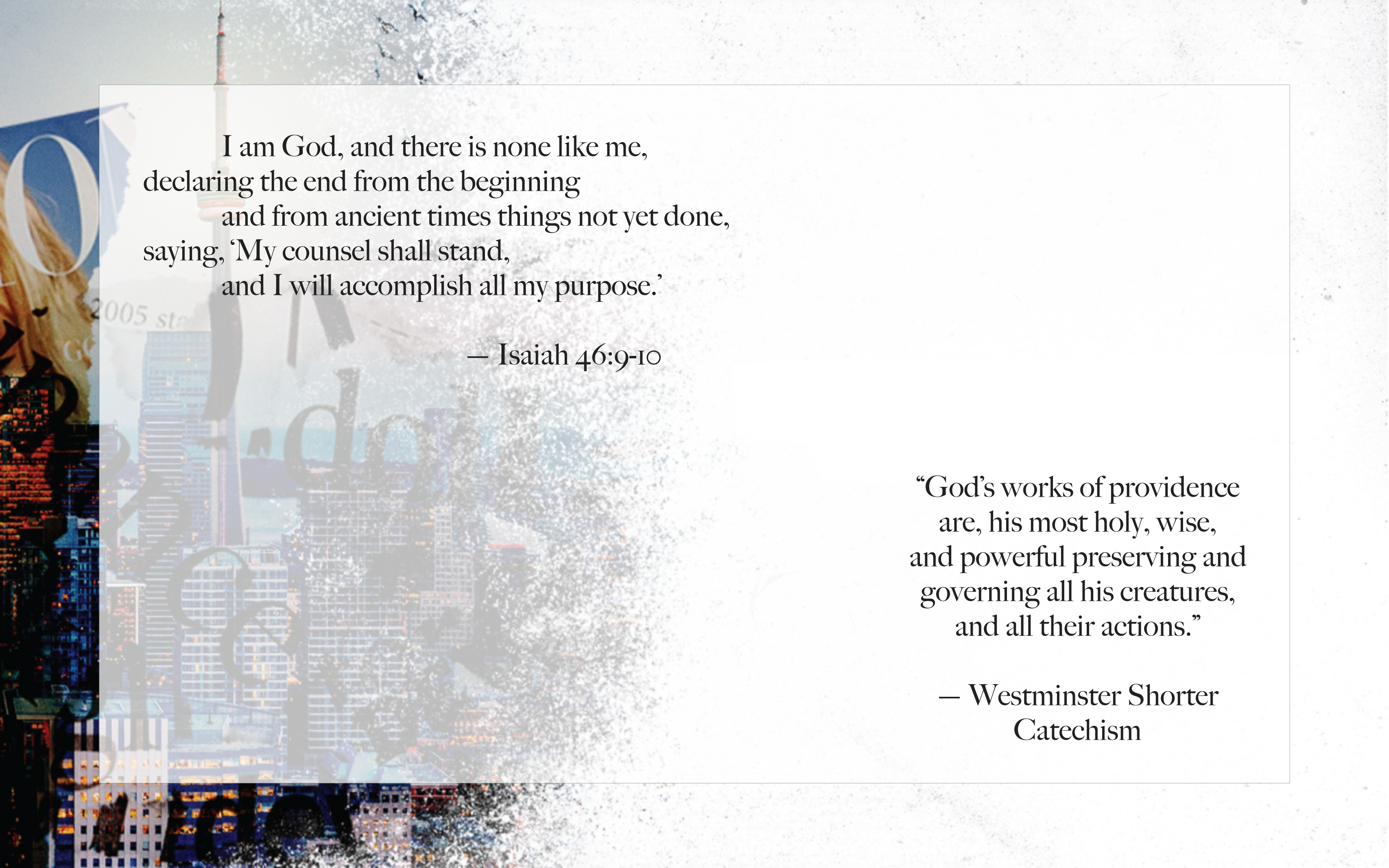
What has been is
what will be, and
what has been done is
what will be done,
and there is nothing
new under the sun.

— Ecclesiastes 1:9



I am God, and there is none like me,
declaring the end from the beginning
and from ancient times things not yet done,
saying, 'My counsel shall stand,
and I will accomplish all my purpose.'

— Isaiah 46:9-10

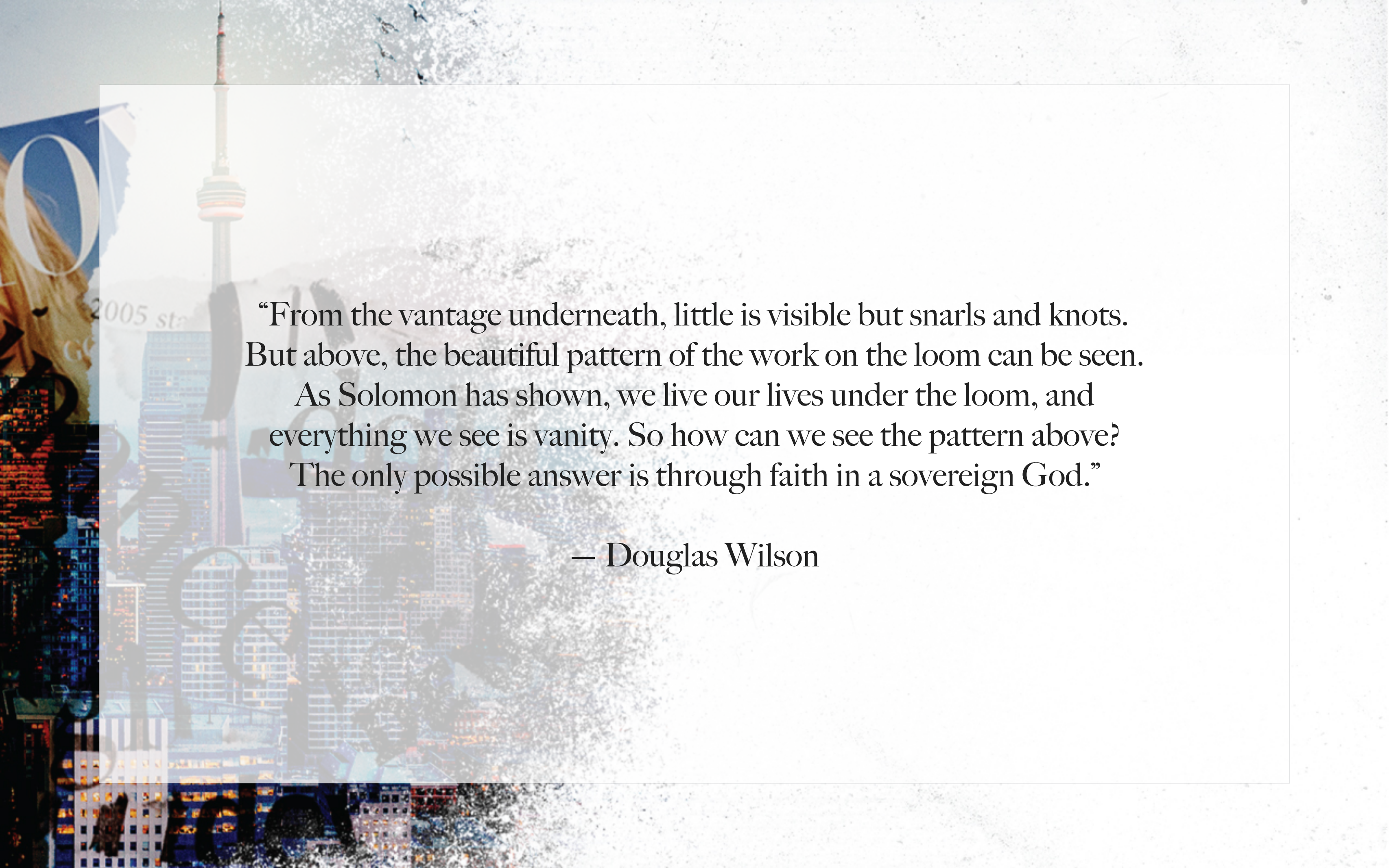


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“God’s works of providence
are, his most holy, wise,
and powerful preserving and
governing all his creatures,
and all their actions.”

— Westminster Shorter
Catechism

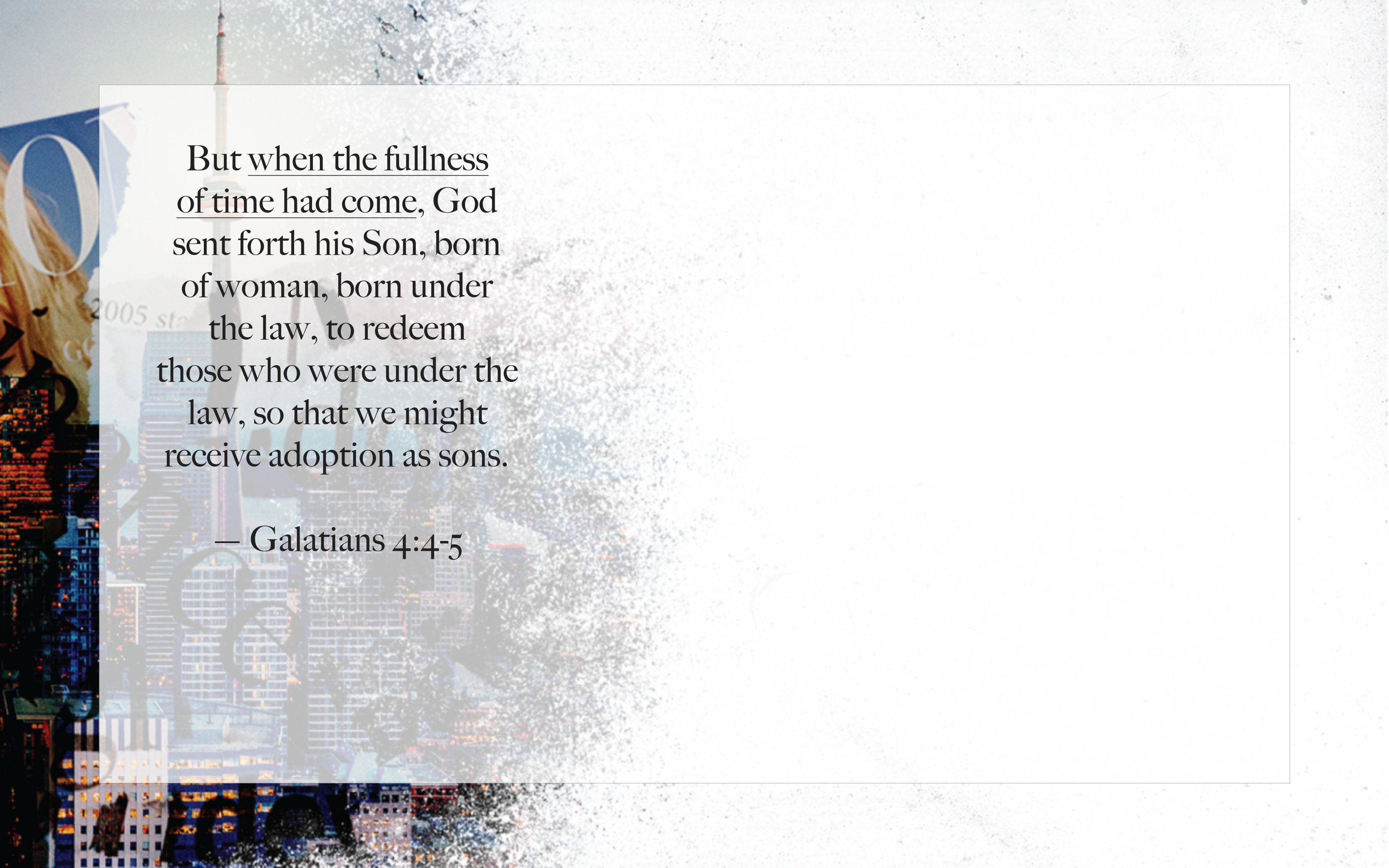


“From the vantage underneath, little is visible but snarls and knots.
But above, the beautiful pattern of the work on the loom can be seen.
As Solomon has shown, we live our lives under the loom, and
everything we see is vanity. So how can we see the pattern above?
The only possible answer is through faith in a sovereign God.”

— Douglas Wilson

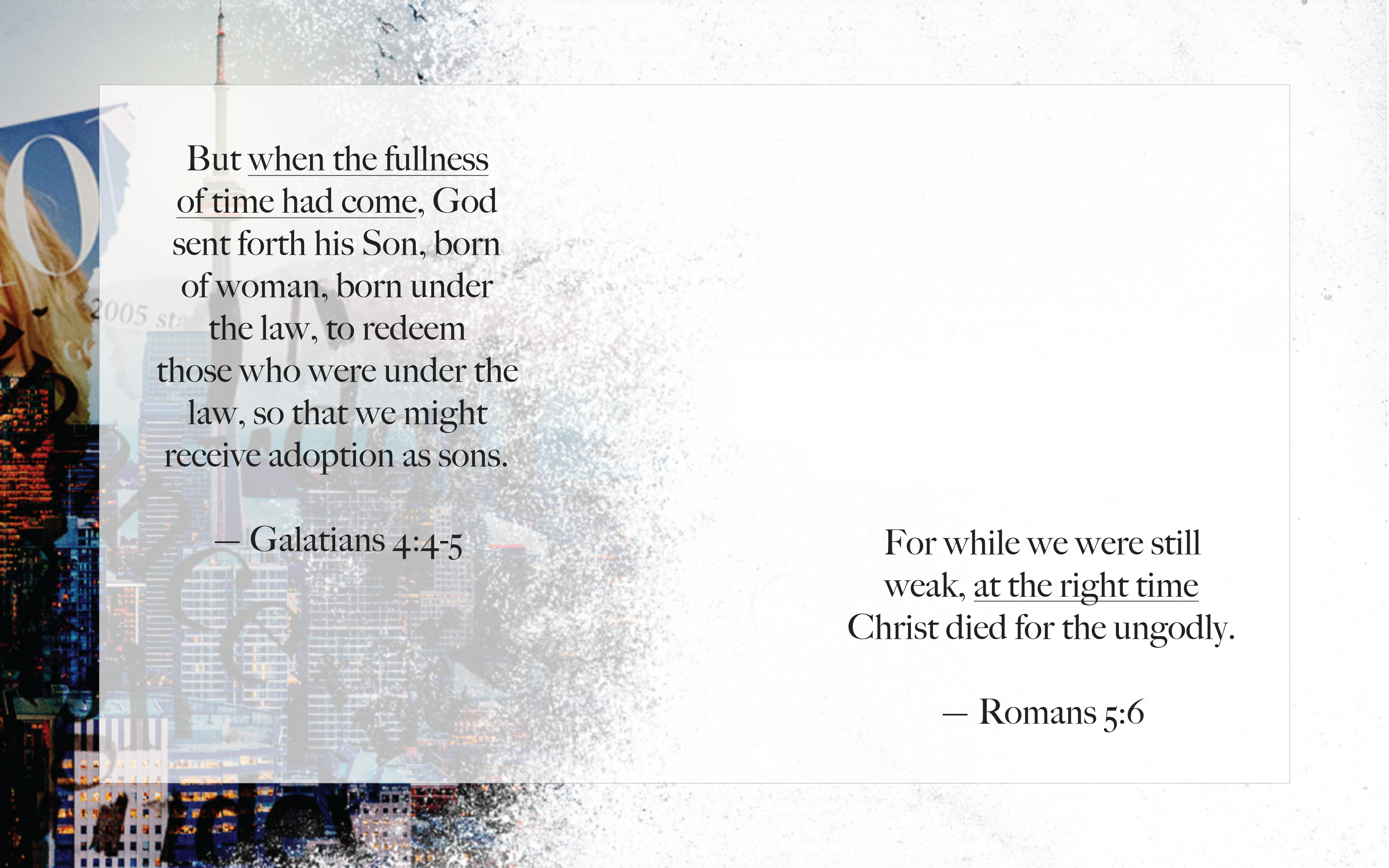


our
ABOVE
THE
LOOM
hope



But when the fullness
of time had come, God
sent forth his Son, born
of woman, born under
the law, to redeem
those who were under the
law, so that we might
receive adoption as sons.

— Galatians 4:4-5

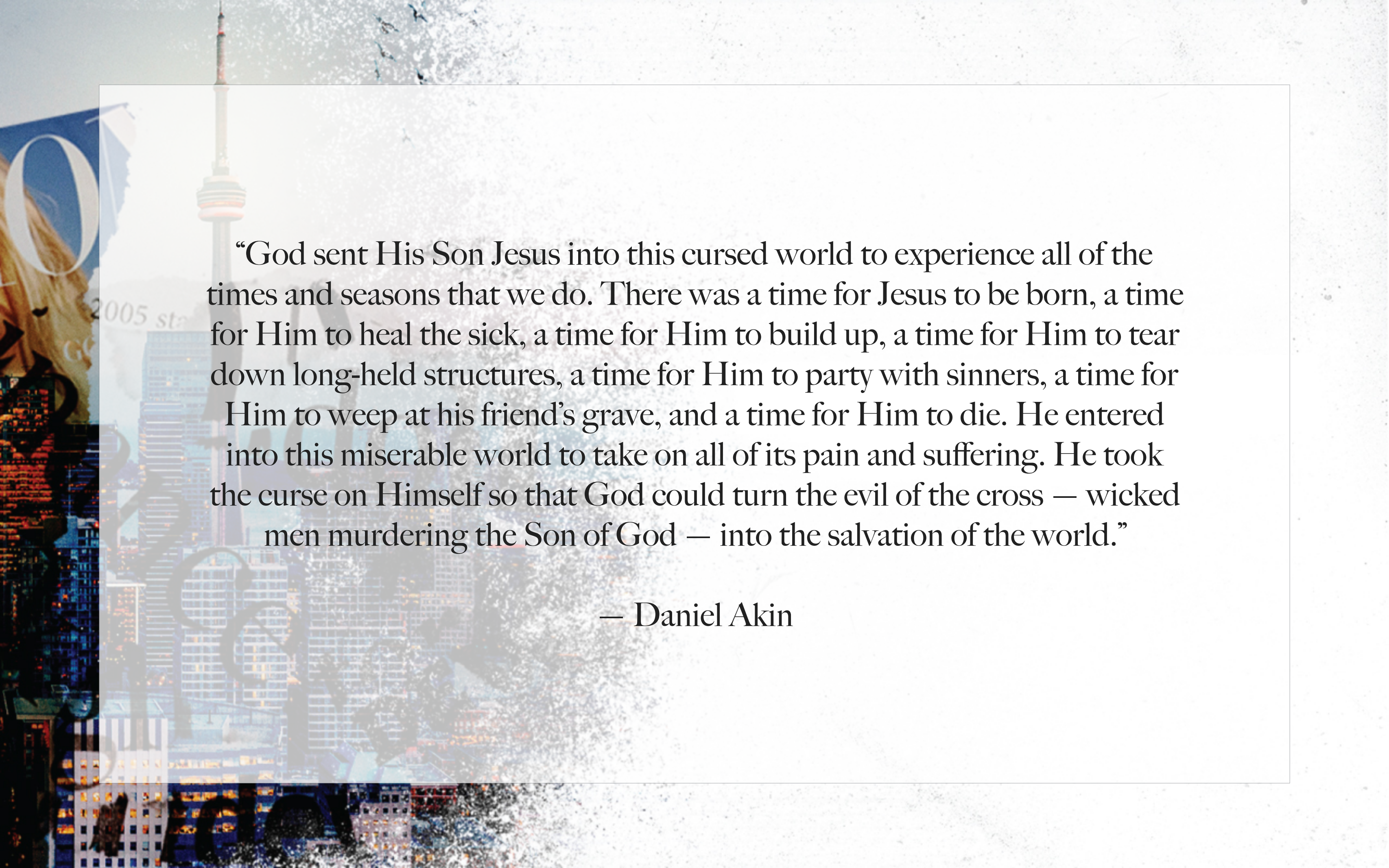


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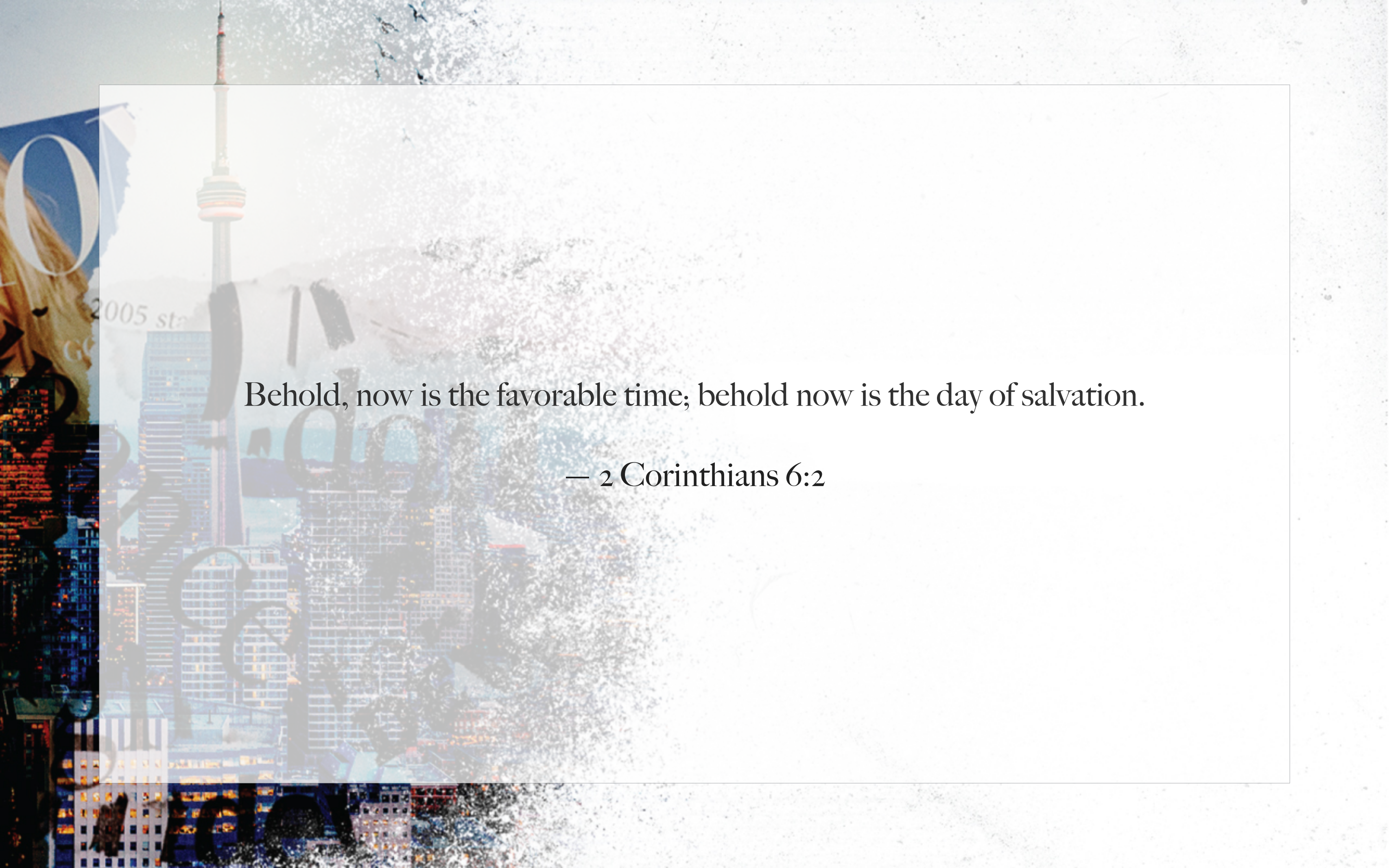
For while we were still
weak, at the right time
Christ died for the ungodly.

— Romans 5:6



“God sent His Son Jesus into this cursed world to experience all of the times and seasons that we do. There was a time for Jesus to be born, a time for Him to heal the sick, a time for Him to build up, a time for Him to tear down long-held structures, a time for Him to party with sinners, a time for Him to weep at his friend’s grave, and a time for Him to die. He entered into this miserable world to take on all of its pain and suffering. He took the curse on Himself so that God could turn the evil of the cross — wicked men murdering the Son of God — into the salvation of the world.”

— Daniel Akin

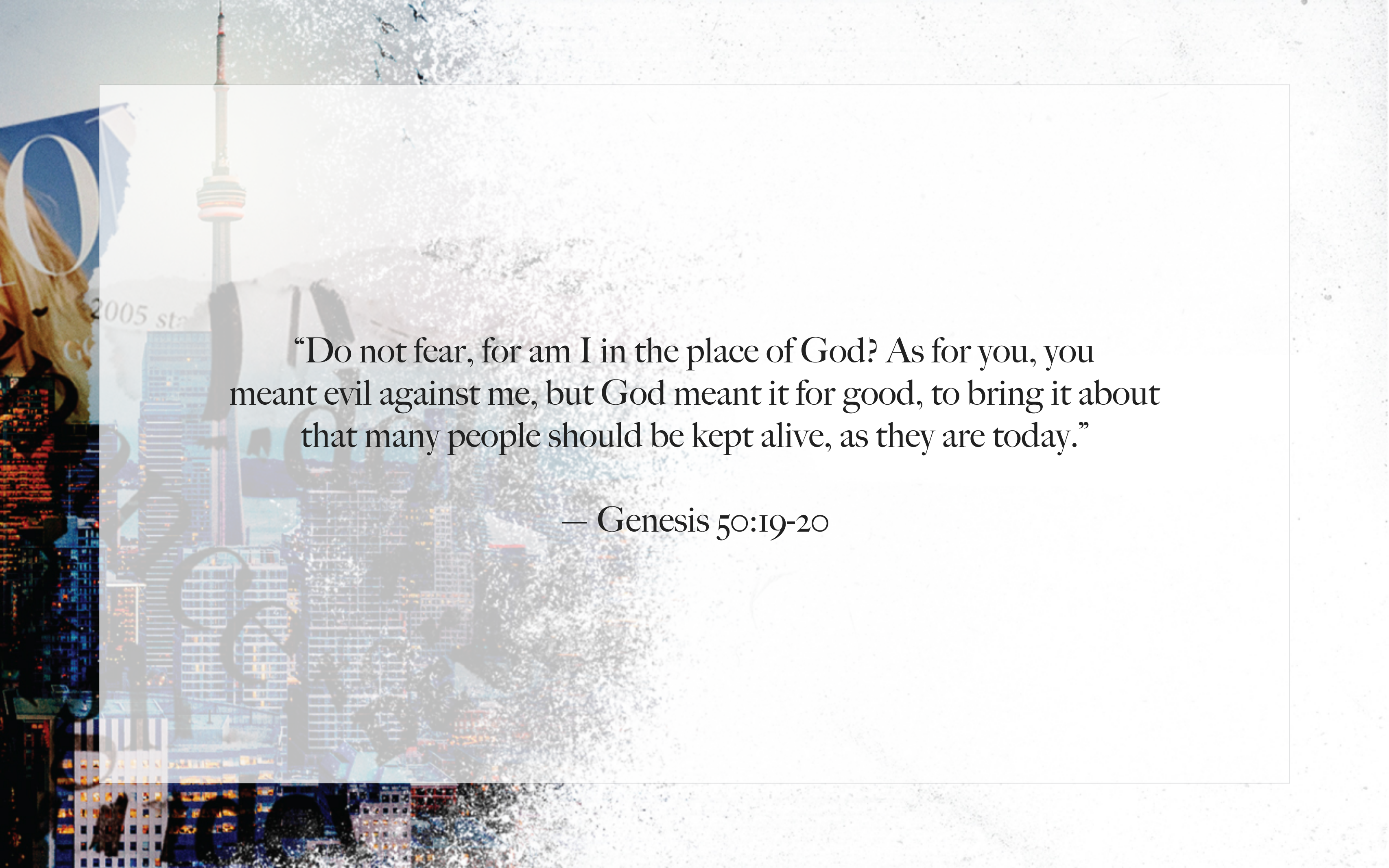


Behold, now is the favorable time; behold now is the day of salvation.

— 2 Corinthians 6:2

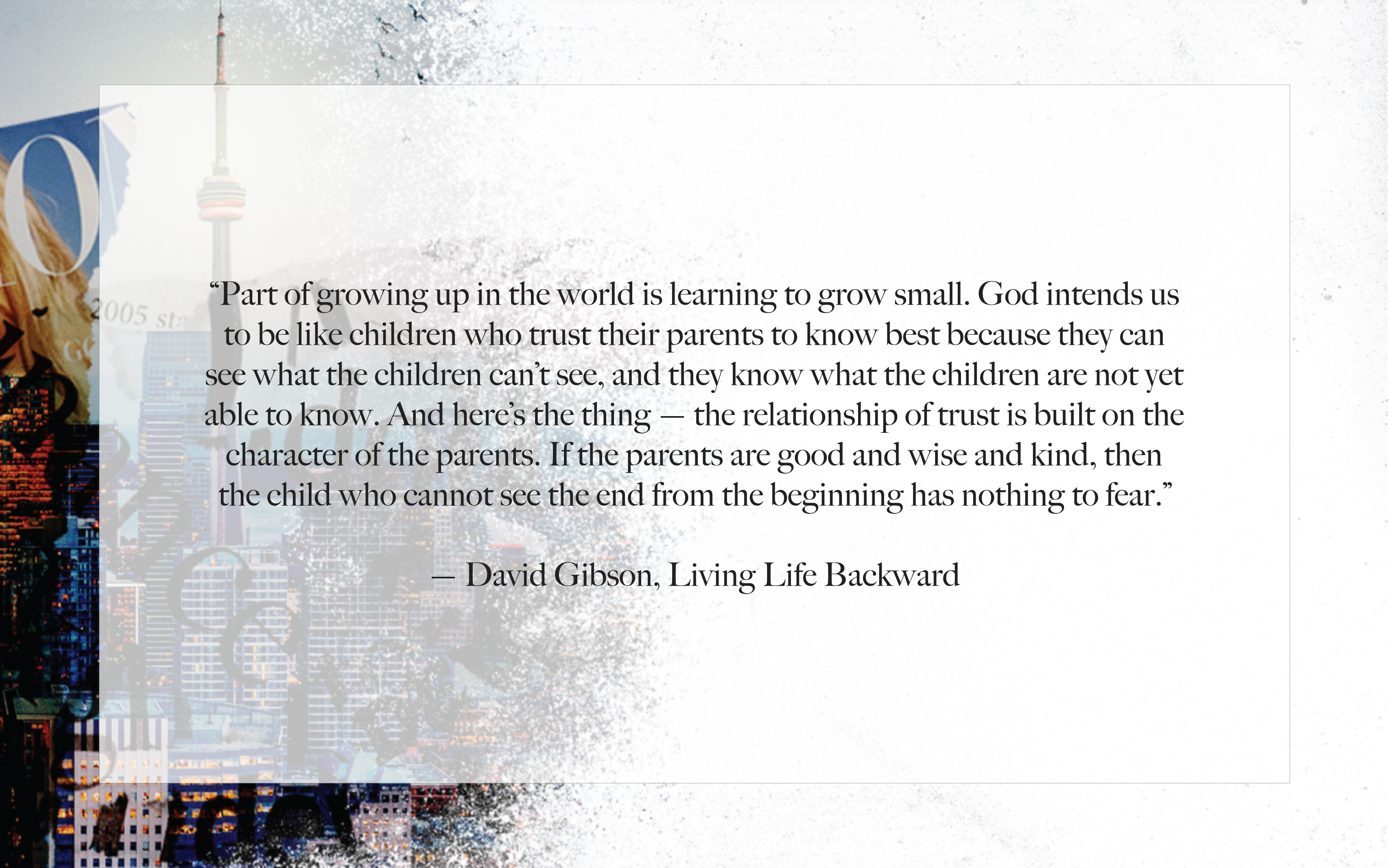


our
ABOVE
THE
LOOM
hope



“Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.”

— Genesis 50:19-20

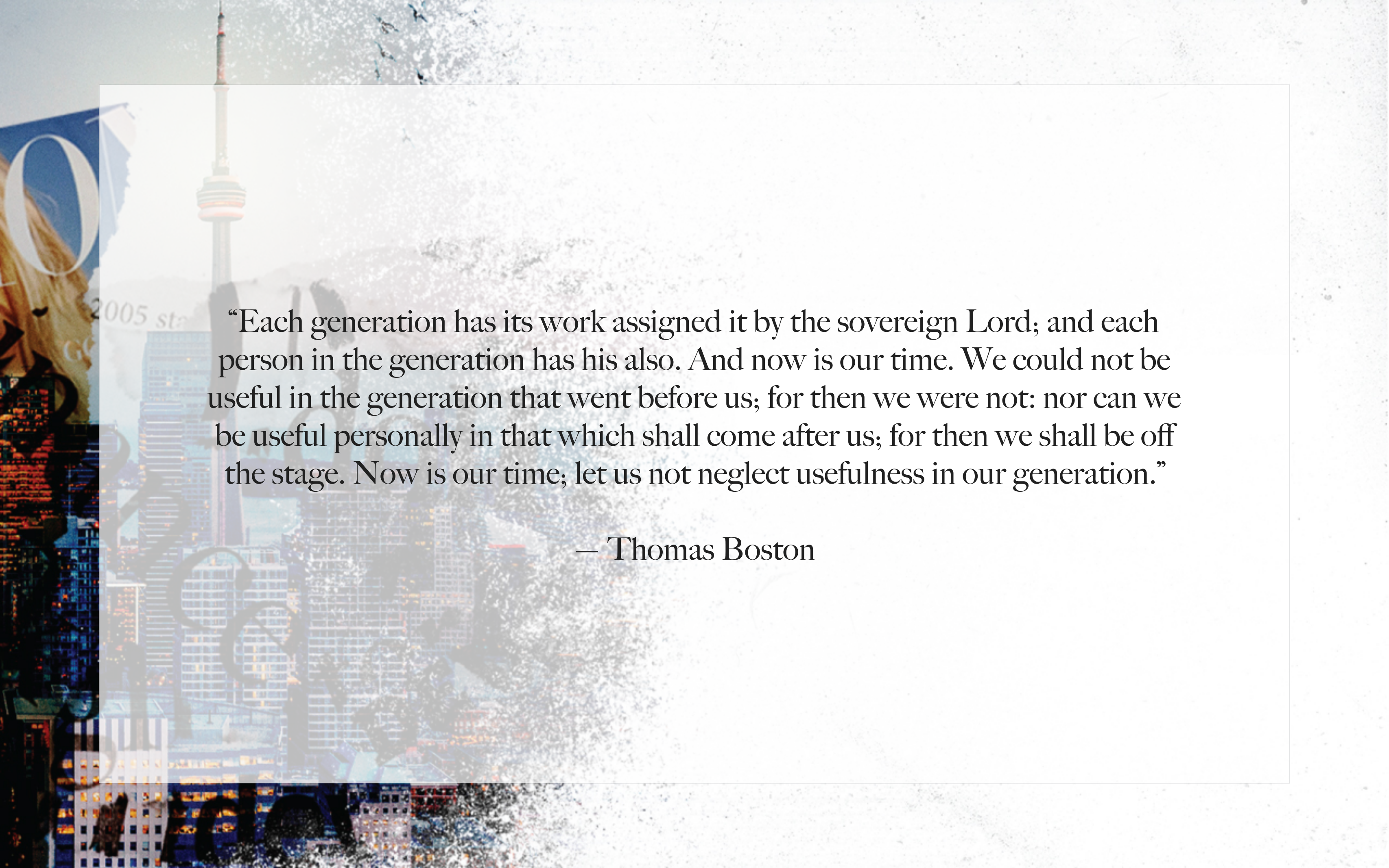


“Part of growing up in the world is learning to grow small. God intends us to be like children who trust their parents to know best because they can see what the children can’t see, and they know what the children are not yet able to know. And here’s the thing — the relationship of trust is built on the character of the parents. If the parents are good and wise and kind, then the child who cannot see the end from the beginning has nothing to fear.”

— David Gibson, *Living Life Backward*



our
ABOVE
THE
LOOM
hope



“Each generation has its work assigned it by the sovereign Lord; and each person in the generation has his also. And now is our time. We could not be useful in the generation that went before us; for then we were not: nor can we be useful personally in that which shall come after us; for then we shall be off the stage. Now is our time; let us not neglect usefulness in our generation.”

— Thomas Boston



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